

fearlessly. On October 15, 1879, I saw one swimming in the East River at the foot of Pine Street, New York City. It was very gentle, the steamer I was on passing within twenty-five feet of it, when it started, flew a short distance, and settled on the water again.

17. *Rallus longirostris crepitans*. CLAPPER RAIL.—This bird seems to be a winter resident on Long Island. Mr. Wm. Dutcher informs me that the gunners at South Oyster Bay see a few every winter. I have the following records from Far Rockaway: Nov. 9, 1872; Nov. 25, 1883; Dec. 5, 1884. Messrs. Wm. Dutcher and L. S. Foster found a freshly killed specimen on the outer beach, February 23, 1885.

18. *Porzana noveboracensis*. YELLOW RAIL.—At Far Rockaway, Oct. 15, 1883, while crossing a large field within a short distance of the salt meadow, I started one of these Rails, but having no gun I did not secure it. It was very gentle; I flushed the bird three times, it rising at first within a few feet and flying but a short distance. Mr. Harold Herrick informs me that he started a Yellow Rail on the Jamaica Bay meadows, near Far Rockaway, in October, 1882, but failed to shoot it.

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## THE BLACK-CAPPED VIREO AND NONPAREIL IN SOUTHWESTERN KANSAS.

BY N. S. GOSS.

WHILE collecting and observing the birds in Comanche County, from May 7 to 18 inclusive, 1885, I captured three pairs of *Vireo atricapillus*, and saw quite a number, all in the deep ravines in the gypsum hills on the Red or Salt Fork of the Arkansas River, near the town of Rumsey. The birds were quite bold and noisy, but this may be the case only during mating and the early part of the breeding season. They are very pleasing singers, their song being not like the 'who's-afraid,' jerky notes of the White-eyed Vireo, nor as loud as those of the Red-eyed, but a more warbling and varied song than that of any of the family which I have heard.

On the 11th I found a nest near the head of a deep cañon, suspended from the forks of the end of a horizontal branch of a small elm tree, about five feet from the ground. It was screened from sight above by the thick foliage of the tree, and the larger surrounding trees; but beneath for quite a distance there was nothing to hide it from view. The material, however, of which it was made so closely resembled the gypsum that had crumbled

from the rocks above and thickly covered the ground, that I should have passed it by unnoticed had I not on my near approach been attracted to the spot by the scolding and the excited actions of the birds. On discovering the nest I did not stop to examine it, but kept leisurely on my course until out of sight; then cautiously turned back, and at a safe distance had the pleasure of seeing both the birds busily at work building their nest, then about two-thirds completed. The nest is hemispherical in shape, and composed of broken fragments of old bleached leaves, with here and there an occasional spider's cocoon, interwoven together and fastened to the twigs with fibrous strippings and silk-like threads from plants and the webs of spiders, and lined with fine stems from weeds and grasses. On the 18th, my last day in the vicinity, I went to the nest confidently expecting to find a full set of eggs, but on account of the cold, wet weather, or from some other cause, the bird had not laid, and I had to content myself with the nest.

That the bird is quite a common summer resident in the vicinity may be safely set down as certain, and I think the species, now so little known, will prove to be abundant in suitable locations from Medina and Comal Counties, Texas, where they were found nesting in the spring of 1878, by Mr. Geo. H. Ragsdale and Mr. W. H. Werner (see Bull. Nutt Orn. Club, Vol. IV, No. 2, pp. 58, 99, and 193), north to and into the gypsum formation in Southwestern Kansas.

The description of the color and markings of the species has been so correctly given by others that I do not think it necessary to take up further space than to touch upon the points respecting which the accounts differ, viz.: The broad white orbital ring does not meet over the eyes, the black running down and separating it for a space of about .10 of an inch. The top and sides of the head in front, in the female, are blackish, fading gradually posteriorly to ashy slate. The other markings are similar to those of the male, but not so bright.

The following notes, from my catalogue and register, are from memoranda taken at the time of killing:—

Sex.	Length.	Alar extent.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.
♂	4.65	6.95	2.15	1.80	.73	.39
♂	4.60	6.90	2.12	1.75	.73	.39
♀	4.40	6.80	2.10	1.70	.73	.38
♀	4.40	6.80	2.10	1.70	.73	.38

Iris light *brick* red; upper mandible black; lower mandible blue; edges and tip of both whitish; legs, feet, and claws deep blue.

I found *Passerina ciris* also quite a common summer resident in the same vicinity and localities. The birds were very shy. I succeeded, however, in shooting a pair. Their sweet song greeted me along the streams and in nearly every ravine or cañon that I entered.

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## THE BIRDS OF SOUTHEASTERN DAKOTA.

BY G. S. AGERSBORG.\*

CLAY County, and also parts of Union and Yankton Counties, have been thoroughly searched by the writer for the last sixteen years, especially Clay; also parts of Lincoln and Minnehaha Counties, with an occasional trip further north. The topography of this part of the country is not very varied, being mainly high, undulating prairie, and low, often marshy, bottom lands. The counties are bordered on the south by the Missouri River, and traversed from north to south by the Big Sioux, Vermilion and Dakota Rivers. It is essentially a prairie country, there being very little timber except along the Missouri, and at different places on the Big Sioux. We find no true lakes, but a number of reedy swamps, which are the resort of myriads of water birds during the migrations. Collecting trips have also been extended to Cedar and Dixon Counties in Nebraska, separated from Dakota by the Missouri River. The topography of these counties differs somewhat from that of Southeastern Dakota, the land being higher, drier, better timbered, and more broken by deep ravines. The avifauna is the same, but many of our Dakota birds, as Swainson's Buzzard, the Turkey Buzzard, and the Swallow-tailed Kite find there better breeding resorts, and consequently are there more abundant.

Several birds given by Professor Aughey in his 'Report on the Nature of the Food of the Birds of Nebraska,' which I have failed

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\* Revised by Prof. W. W. Cooke.